

# Keeping Baby Cool in the Summer



It is important to keep baby comfortable in the summer. In hot weather, babies are at risk of heat rash, dehydration, sunburn and heat stroke. Overheating has also been linked to sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Babies become overheated much more quickly than adults. When it's hot, your baby will need to breastfeed and drink water often to stay hydrated.

## Keeping Baby Comfortable Indoors

- Dress your baby the way you are dressed, or in an undershirt and diaper or diaper only.
- Place the crib or bassinet in the coolest room.
- A fan can help keep the room cool. Fans should never blow directly on the baby and should be out of baby's reach.
- A lukewarm bath or cool wash cloth can help cool baby down.
- In very hot weather, take your baby somewhere with air-conditioning such as a mall or a friend's house.
- If you have air conditioning, your home may be cool enough.
- If you're comfortable, then your baby probably is too.

## Keeping Baby Comfortable Outdoors

- Dress baby in lightweight clothes that cover the skin, including a long-sleeved shirt, long pants and a hat.
- Infants under six months of age should be kept out of direct sunlight, especially between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. when the sun's rays are the strongest. If the sun cannot be avoided, cover baby in light long sleeve tops, long pants and a hat. Use sunscreen on exposed areas, like face, ears, neck and back of hands. For babies over 6 months, it is okay to use sunscreen. Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours and after swimming.
- Never leave a baby or child inside a vehicle. Parking in the shade, opening the window or running the air conditioner **will not** keep the temperature inside the car at a safe level.
- Check that the car seat is not too hot before putting baby in, especially the metal parts which get extremely hot.

## Your baby might be too hot if he or she ...

- feels hot to you (check the back of the neck and abdomen)
- is sweating
- has a heat rash (looks like tiny pink pimples surrounded by pink skin)
- looks unwell
- becomes floppy
- is irritable
- has skin that feels dry
- refuses to drink
- has fewer wet diapers than usual

## If your baby is hot

- Give extra fluids
- Cool baby down with a luke warm (not cold) bath or wash cloths
- Take baby to a cooler location

## About Heat Stroke

Heat stroke occurs when the body overheats and loses too much water. Heat stroke can damage the body's organs and cause death.

## Signs of heat stroke include:

- rising body temperature
- less urine than usual
- increased thirst (but as baby gets weaker, he or she may drink less)
- dry mouth and eyes
- headache
- muscle cramps
- baby seems sleepy
- confusion
- shortness of breath
- vomiting
- coma (not waking when touched or called)



**If your baby or child has any of these signs, he or she needs urgent medical treatment.**

Call an ambulance (911), or take your baby to a hospital.

While waiting for medical treatment: move baby to the shade or indoors and use damp cloths to cool your baby down.

If your baby is conscious and able to swallow, try get him or her to drink fluids.